from MPs regarding the long pending demand of canteen employees of Madras Atomic Power Station Departmental Canteen for their treatment on par with regular employees in accordance with Supreme Court's Judgement;

(b) if so, whether steps have been taken to declare such canteen employees as departmental employees;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether it is a fact that contract labourers are being engaged in the Departmental Canteen of MAPS when employees are available to perfrom the work;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) whether steps are being taken to stop engagement of contract labourers in MAPS canteen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARMANGALAM): (a) to (c) Representations have been received regarding treating employees working in the canteen at the Madras Atomic Power Station as Government servants in the light of a judgement of Supreme Court of January 1992 which refers to canteens attached to Central Government Offices. The canteen at the Madras Atopublic sector enterprise namely, the public sector enterprise namely the Nuclear Power Corporation which was formed in September, 1987 i.e. prior to the judgement of Supreme Court of January, 1992. The terms of employment of the canteen workers at the Madras Atomic Power Station are regulated by the Nuclear Power Corporation.

(d) and (e) No contract workers are being engaged normally in the canteen at the Madras Atomic Power Station. In case of need due to absence of some of the employees, work is done through persons engaged on daily wages.

(f) Does not arise, in view of (d) & (e) above.

Arsenic Poisioning in West Bengal

@4817. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "500,000 affected by arsenic poisioning in West Bengal" as reported in the Economic Times dated 4th June, 1992;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Central Government propose to provide special assistance to the State Government to face the situation;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(e) what other steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI H. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Presence of arsenic in ground water was first noticed by the State Govrenment in 1978. Some studies on arsenic pollution were conducted by the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health and School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta. A working Group was also consituted by the Government of West Bengal in 1983 to study various aspects of arsenic pollution. A Steering Committee was constituted by the State Government with experts from different streams for an investigative study. The report of this Committee was

@Previously unstared question 2913, transferred from 5th August 1992.

received in June, 1991. The Committee confirmed tne presence of arsenic pollution beyond permissible limit in some localised patches. The Committee had observed that the deposition of huge amount of arsenic could not be anthropogenic and the source might be geo-physical. The Committee suggested to take the third aquifer of the ground water; Recently, some case of arsenic pollution have been found even in the water drawn from the third aquifer. Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission had also sponsored a study by the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health on the removal of arsenic from ground water. The final reports of the study is still awaited.

(a) Special assistance will be considered by the Central Government on receipt of specific proposals from the State Government.

(d) The assistance would be in the nature of technical guidance and financial asistance under the Sub Missions under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission.

(e) In the affected areas, safe alternative sources of supply are to be proivded from sources free from arsenic. It is also necessary to undertake further research and development to clearly establish the causes of excess arsenic, to demarcate the affected areas and develop the treatment processes. The State Government of West Bengal have constituted another Committee for further in-depth studies for the problems.

Implementation of Chakbandi

£4818. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Chakbandi implementation has ben dropped in the State of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therofer;

(c) wheher Government have studied the likely impact of chakbandi abolition on the farmers of Bihar and also on other States of the Union; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) and (b) Information is being collected from the State Government of Bihar.

(c) No such study has been undertaken by the Central Government.

(d) Question does not arise.

Agricultural Produce s Marketing Regulations

££4819. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ASSOCHAM has called for substantial changes in the model law the Agricultural Produce Marketing Regulations prepared by the "Centre" for adoption by the State Governments to protect the interests of farmers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI H. PATEL): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) The ASSOCHAM has suggested following changes:—

(1) The definition of agricultural produce be made more explicit to

&&Previously unstarred question 3299, transferred from 7th August, 1992.

£Previously untared question 3300, transferred 7th August, 1992.